



Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona
José de Jesus Rivera

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For Information Contact Public Affairs

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ROLLOVER DRIVER CONVICTED OF ALIEN SMUGGLING WHICH RESULTED IN DEATH OF FOUR

TUCSON, ARIZONA -- United States Attorney José de Jesus Rivera announced that a Federal Jury returned guilty verdicts today against, **DIEGO GALLEGOS-CASTILLO** on eleven counts of Transportation of Illegal Aliens.

On February 5, 2000, at Federal Route 19 at the South Komelic turnoff, near Sells, Arizona the defendant was driving an extended-cab pickup truck with eleven illegal aliens. While traveling at an estimated speed of 87-93 miles per hour defendant lost control of the vehicle, crashed into a wash, and flipped the truck end to end. Four of the eleven Mexican nationals were killed as a result of impact. One of the four was a 14-year-old girl. The seven others received serious bodily injuries. Law enforcement and emergency personnel were called to the scene and the injured were transported to various medical facilities.

U. S. District Court Judge William D. Keller scheduled sentencing for Diego Gallegos-Castillo on April 9, 2001.

U.S. Attorney José de Jesus Rivera stated, *"This is another example of carelessness and disregard for the safety and human life of those involved in alien smuggling. Individuals involved in this crime will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, particularly when the crime involves a death or injury."*

The Mexican consulate is to be commended for their assistance in assuring the surviving victims were available to give testimony in this trial.

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The investigation that led to the successful prosecution was conducted was a result of cooperative law enforcement provided by Tohono O'odham law enforcement, United States Border Patrol, Border Patrol Investigations, Tucson Police Department, and Arizona Department of Public Safety. The prosecution was handled by Lynnette Kimmins and Jane Westby , Assistant United States Attorneys, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

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